

Oatlands Historic District
The Studio
U. S. Rt. 15
Leesburg vicinity
Loudoun County
Virginia

HABS No. VA-949-D

HABS
VA
54-LEEB
4D-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

HABS
VA
54-LEEBV,
4D-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

OATLANDS HISTORIC DISTRICT, THE STUDIO HABS No. VA-949-D

Location: U.S. Route 15, Leesburg vicinity, Loudoun County, Virginia

Present Owner: The National Trust for Historic Preservation
1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20036

Present Use: Unoccupied and unused

Significance: The pleasing proportions of this small dependency at Oatlands is visually related to the Main House and to the formal gardens. Together with the Servants' Quarters it forms the northwest enclosure for the gardens.

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This small dependency at Oatlands is east of the Main House, with its south wall approximately aligned with the north wall of the house. Architecturally this structure appears as a cubic mass of pleasing proportions, articulated by the foundation wall and the corner piers, which have inset brick panels above and below a moulded wooden string course.
2. Condition of fabric: Generally good, except for exposed wood. Interior floors, exterior trim and the wood string course need paint and/or replacing.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: 19'-0" x 19'-0". (The structure is a cube).
2. Foundations: Exposed rubble sandstone and slate, capped with two brick courses.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: The exposed red brick walls are set in common bond with a header course every fourth course. Headers in the inset brick panels are not aligned with the piers and walls. A continuous moulded wooden string course, painted white, is incorporated in the brick wall, four courses above the flat brick arch lintels of the openings. Scaffolding pockets are exposed. The heads of the lower brick panels are corbelled brick.
4. Structural system, framing: Brick bearing walls with wood interior framing.
5. Porches, stoops, bulkheads: The entrance stoop on the east consists of a slate block, approximately 2'-6" x 4'-3" x 7-1/2".

6. Chimneys: A brick chimney is centered on the north wall.
7. Openings: Lintels of all openings have flat brick arches.
 - a. Doorways and doors: The entrance doorway on the east is composed of a paneled wood and glass door flanked by narrow side-lights. The wood jamb in the brick reveal is a flat board, 1-3/4" x 10" with beaded exterior edge. The head is similar. The unpainted wood sill, 1-2/4" x 12", is set on a solid slate block which is let into the exposed foundation wall. The wood door has nine lights, 9" x 13", over two recessed wood panels. The door is separated from the side-lights by flat unmoulded posts. The 8" wide side-lights contain three 5-1/2" x 13" lights above a large-scale fluted panel. The sill of the lights is a large-scale cable moulding. There is an 11" high moulded baseboard at the bottom of the panels. Above the moulded transom bar is a glazed transom with four lights. A slightly projecting shed roof which has obviously been added is inserted at the head of the opening below the flat brick arch.
 - b. Windows: Two double-hung windows are symmetrically placed on both the south and the west walls. They contain six-over-six-lights, 8" x 10". The inset wood sills are badly in need of paint.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: The low hipped roof is covered with wooden shingles.
 - b. Cornice: The cornice consists of several flat wood bands with a simple crown moulding, painted white.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The plan consists of a single room with the entrance on the east and a fireplace centered on the north wall.
2. Stairways: None.
3. Flooring: Wood painted dark red. The floor and joists have rotted at the north side of the room.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The exposed brick walls are painted white. At the base of the walls are two courses of projecting brick and a quarter-round moulding. The ceiling finish is exposed pine decking on exposed, dark-stained joists.

5. Doorways and doors: See "Description of Exterior."
6. Decorative features, trim: The only interior feature is the brick fireplace and wooden mantel. The lintel of the opening has a flat arch and the hearth is brick trimmed with a moulded wood member. The white-painted mantel consists of engaged flat, fluted, pilasters with classical capitals supporting a projecting entablature. The entablature consists of a moulded architrave, and a reeded frieze below dentils and ovolo moulding. The crown mould is decorated with bead and reel moulding on the edge.
7. Mechanical equipment: None.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: In contrast to the informal setting of the dependencies west of the main house at Oatlands, this structure and the almost identical part of the Servants' Quarters (on the north) are situated at the beginning of the formal gardens for the plantation. The east end of the lawn of the main house terminates at a balustraded terrace. The large-scale, white painted wooden balusters define the entrance of the formal gardens. Brick gateposts surmounted by globular wooden finials, and a wrought-iron gate, form the entranceway to the gardens. The balustrade north of these posts is divided into three bays by low brick piers and terminates at the studio wall. Northward, beyond the studio, is a low brick wall which extends to the Servants' Quarters. These two buildings and the balustrade therefore become part of the formal introduction to the garden. A brick-paved walkway, in herringbone pattern, leads from the axial garden walk to the studio. East of the walk the grass is terraced down into the garden in front of the studio. A valley and low wooded hills form a vista beyond the garden. There is a concrete-paved terrace between the studio and the Servants' Quarters.

PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken through joint efforts and financing between HABS and the National Trust. Of particular value was the advice and cooperation of E. Blaine Cliver, Historical Architect, and Thomas M. Slade, Architectural Historian, both of the National Trust. This report was prepared by Woodrow W. Wilkins, A.I.A., Supervisory Architect, HABS Oatlands project, during the summer of 1973.